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Steak And Ice Cream Called No Cure for Red 'Brain Washing' of POWs

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Of Our Washington Bureau

SCRANTON, Pa. — It will take more than steak and ice cream to cure the American POWs who underwent Communist "brain-washing" torture in Korea.

The first authoritative public outline of what to expect from these GIs has been set forth by John H. Hayes, one of the few Americans so far to undergo Chinese brain-washing and recovery.

The Defense Department has revealed that "a small group" of repatriated American POWs "succumbed to Communist indoctrination" and will be treated at the Valley Forge, Pa., Army Hospital.

In an interview here, Hayes, a China-born Presbyterian missionary, rejected predictions by officials in Korea that "a steak and an ice cream cone" is all the victims of brain-washing will need.

Hayes is a gray-bearded, 65-year-old giant of a man and a former Rhodes scholar. He was released by the Communists last fall, after a year of torture and restraint in China.

He has conferred at length in Washington with his experience with Central Intelligence Agency experts and CIA Director Allan Dulles.

In Scranton on a tour of church groups for the National Board of Presbyterian Missions, Hayes emphatically seconded Army regrets at stories that victims of brain-washing will be somehow "re-washed."

Newspapermen have not yet been allowed to interview GI brain-washing victims. Speculative stories have appeared in some newspapers and magazines.

"The wrong treatment could be worse almost than the experience these men have suffered," Hayes said. He himself was galled for 75 days

and came to believe absolute lies were the truth.

Hayes gave this picture of how the men may behave and their needs:

"At first they will need time, rest, space freedom from social contacts, a chance to get out-of-doors.

"In some cases they may have a terrific emotional upset just at the sight of American soil. But, unless a person is really mentally unbalanced, I think the sooner they get to their homes the better.

"We must treat them normally, for heaven's sake. Give them the reassurance of occasional medical checkups, and above all — welcome."

He warned against early questioning on their prison experiences.

"I have been out of it six months, yet only in the last 10 days could I discuss my experiences without feeling disturbed and nervous."

Hayes described the torture of mind as much more painful than a terrible toothache.

"We must leave off asking people questions until those wounds heal. They are real wounds. Don't even ask about details, the food for example. Let it go. They want to forget it."

But he said the men eventually will have a great deal to say on their own, because "a man must reinstate his own individual judgment and self-respect. These are gone. They have been taken from him."

"Listen with interest to anything he has to say."

Finally, he prescribed "welcome, continuous welcome, sheer personal interest in the man."

Gradually, he said, the man will orient himself, seeing his prison experiences and distorted views in perspective.

"Recovery is more than steak and ice cream, although that will certainly help. It isn't physical."

"I found a certain forgiveness which contains within it im-

pressions and judgments on my experience gradually moved off the landscape. You begin to see clearly."

He said "re-washing" is the wrong way of viewing it. It is really a re-orientation.

At first, when he returned to American environment, Hayes felt "curiously lost," he said.

"Then I came to realize the tremendous strength that is America, the initiative and individualism of the American citizen."

"To let that gradually come to the man is the best corrective against a totalitarian government."